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Our Everyday Foods in Today's World

The table and discussion below, based on figures supplied by the Department of Agriculture, were presented by Miss Jessie Harris in a talk at the annual meeting of the American Dietetics Association.

"In making predictions about the 1944 food supply it should be emphasized that all estimates are necessarily tentative. Gazing into the crystal ball involves the unpredictable factors of weather, war, and human beings. It is obvious that many things will operate to change the amount when the final reckoning comes. It might be asked why give out figures so far in advance. This has been done so that you might know that the War Food Administration is looking out for the 1944 diet; in fact, it is already thinking in terms of the 1945 supply. There is definite purpose in their planning, shaped always by nutritional principles. In order to do a thing as stupendous as keeping the food supply adequate for civilians and all other claimants, things cannot be left entirely to chance. There must be future planning and by letting you in on these plans well in advance we can count on you to help where needed to further them. These plans call for changes in the food habits and Americans need help in doing that. Americans do not need to change their food preferences but they will gladly change their food practices to have a real part in winning the war and establishing an enduring peace. Food is playing an important role in achieving their goals."

Quantities of Food Available in the United States for Civilian Consumption (Per Capita Food Supply—Retail Basis)*

1935-39	1941		1944	1943
Lb.	Lb.		Lb.	Lb.
449	484	Milk in terms of milk	515	517
(209 qts.)	(225 qts.)	equivalents	(240 qts.)	(246 qts.)
140	132	Potatoes (sweet and white)	157	150
16	16	Dry beans, nuts, soya	22	20
78	90	Citrus fruits and tomatoes	104	93
95	99	Green and yellow vegetables	109	99
214	220	Other vegetables and fruits	204	177
36 (23 doz.)	38 (25 doz.)	Eggs	41 (27 doz.)	41 (27 doz.)
136	150	Meat, fish, poultry	149	146
199	204	Cereal (and flour)	211	208
65	71	Fats and oils ^{1/}	65	67
106	115	Sugar	96	90

*The figures are based on unpublished information from the Civilian Food Requirements Branch, Food Distribution Administration, as of November 17, 1943.

^{1/}Including bacon, salt pork, and butter.

In the years from 1935-39, many people did not have the money to eat what they wanted. In 1941, the financial situation was much more favorable and plenty of food was available. A per capita comparison of the retail food supply in the period from 1935-39 with that of the year 1941 reveals the way Americans chose their foods when more of them could have what they preferred. They chose substantially more citrus fruits, 15 percent; meat, fish, and poultry, 10 percent; fats and oils, 9 percent; sweets, 8 percent; milk, 8 percent; moderately more eggs, other fruits and vegetables, green, yellow vegetables, cereals, and bread-stuffs, 3 to 6 percent. No increase in dried peas or beans, and a decrease of 6 percent in potatoes.

When we compare what will probably be available in 1944 with what the people chose in 1941 we find less of the food that our tastes dictate and more of the foods that we do not use so abundantly when we have our own free choice. There will be found much more dried peas and beans, including soya products, 38 percent; potatoes, 19 percent; citrus fruits, 16 percent; green and yellow vegetables, 10 percent; eggs, 8 percent; moderately more milk, 6 percent; cereal, 3 percent; and in some of our favorite foods, decreases as follows: Meat, 1 percent; other fruits and vegetables, 7 percent; fats and oils, 8 percent; and sugar, 17 percent.

The differences between what we have had in 1943 and what we will have in 1944 are as follows: In 1944 there will be substantially more of other fruits and vegetables, 15 percent; citrus fruits and tomatoes, 12 percent; dried peas and beans, 10 percent; green and yellow vegetables, 10 percent; moderately more sugar, 6 percent; potatoes, 5 percent; slightly more or the same of meat, 2 percent; cereal and flour, 1 percent; milk and eggs the same; and less fats and oils, 3 percent.

These figures should be taken into consideration in planning the nutrition program this coming year.

"The Civilian Food Requirements Branch of the Food Distribution Administration assures us that the figures for 1943 indicate that, if the food supply is equitably distributed and if waste is minimized, there is assurance that civilians will be able to obtain enough food to meet all their nutritional requirements. The immediate problem in obtaining the adequate nutritional status of the civilian population in wartime, therefore, is to get the foods to the consumer on an equitable basis, and then to be sure that all food is used wisely and completely."

WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FOOD

A study made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics on what the American people know and do under the present food situation gives some interesting information which should be useful to nutrition committees in planning an effective program. (This study was made for administrative purposes only; therefore copies of the report are not available for general distribution.)

Omaha, Nebr., and Providence, R. I., were chosen for this study. Both cities have experienced wartime food stringencies—scarcities, rationing restrictions, rising prices. Providence has suffered more acute shortages than has Omaha. It has few rural ties and regards its distance as disadvantageous in the present food situation. Food prices have risen more sharply in Providence. Omaha people feel their locality insures a reasonable supply of food even in times of shortages. The groups interviewed in each city represent a cross section of families, except that families eating most meals away from home were excluded from this study.

Some of the following findings and recommendations of this study might be used as guideposts, particularly for the Food Use Program.

Findings: (1) Most housewives use nutritionally favorable alternates for scarce foods. Many have a good working knowledge of the kinds of foods which should be included in the diet but only few are well-informed about the food elements which make particular foods "good for you." (2) A lack of knowledge about the nutritive content of foods narrows the range of appropriate alternates the housewife can make and becomes an increasing handicap as the availability of familiar alternates decreases. A study of the reasons given for needing different foods reveals that people are seldom misinformed. When people are well enough educated about nutrition to use terms such as "protein," "starch," etc., they tend to use them correctly. The rest of the people are not misinformed, but they haven't enough information. (3) In general, custom and taste play a larger role in determining selections of food than does knowledge of their "health value." Housewives tend to think of foods in terms of the part they play in the meal, such as foods for the "main dish." Different meals require traditional foods, such as cereal for breakfast. (4) The foods typically regarded as "essential" in the diet, are meat, potatoes, and vegetables. (5) Few people know about soybeans, their preparation, or place in the diet.

Recommendations: (1) People need to know more about meat alternates, so that they may realize that adequate health may be maintained when meat alternates are used in the diet. (2) With the reduction in the amount of milk available for civilian consumption housewives should be given adequate information on milk alternates and the less commonly known forms of milk, such as dried and skimmed. They need assurance that the amounts allotted to them plus the wise use of alternates and milk in less commonly known forms will be sufficient to maintain the health of their families. (3) An intensive educational campaign should accompany the introduction of new foods. (4) To increase the use of an already familiar food, further education should be provided as to the contribution of the food to the diet, on the different ways it can be used, and on the place it can take in different meals. (5) Many people do not know that alternates may complete an adequate diet and that a shift from one food to another does not necessarily endanger health. (6) To get the necessary information about foods to the people who need it most, other means of publicity in addition to the regular ones should be used, because the usual media reach only upper- and middle-income groups.

Some of the trends accompanying shortages are indicated by the comparison of the cities of Providence and Omaha. As stringency increases, people find their usual habits increasingly disrupted. They grow more dependent upon what nutrition knowledge they possess, and upon their ingenuity in shopping and making desirable adjustments. There develops in the community a growing sense of competition for foodstuffs. In the resulting seller's market, people find it difficult to manage within their allotment, and they experience increasing frustration at the growing discrimination practiced by retailers. Rising prices—legal and illegal—impose further frustrations and as these hindrances multiply people begin to depend upon undesirable devices—recourse to black markets and misuse of ration coupons.

USE OF VEGETABLE PROTEINS OF SUPERIOR BIOLOGICAL VALUE ENCOURAGED

Resolution passed by Food and Nutrition Board, National Research Council, October 22, 1943, follows in part: "In view of the reduced supply of animal proteins during the war emergency, the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council considers it advisable that the use for human food of vegetable proteins of superior biological value should be encouraged and stimulated by

opening all reasonable avenues for such use. Vegetable sources rich in protein of high quality include soybeans, peanuts, corn germ, wheat germ, and yeast. To varying degree, they have the merit of supplementing the proteins of the endosperms of cereal grains with certain amino acids in which the latter are more or less deficient."

The resolution goes on to say that, though these products, rich in vegetable protein, are not equally adaptable to all purposes, each has merit and the possibilities for their use should be thoroughly explored. Such exploration should include distribution through commercial channels, development of recipes for use in the home, incorporation by bakeries in standard breads or specialty breads, and use in commercial meat products, insofar as this is practicable.

This resolution grew out of the Board's consideration of the nutritionally reasonable avenues for greater use in bread and other food commodities of soybean products and other vegetable sources of protein. Information about the outcome of this resolution, and suggestions to the committees for featuring soya products and other high-quality vegetable protein sources in the War Food Use Program will be forthcoming.

FOOD FOR FREEDOM

The National Consumers Food Conference, sponsored by Food For Freedom, Inc., held in Cleveland, Ohio, October 27 and 28, 1943, was attended by over 200 delegates representing 82 national organizations, with a limited number of guests attending as speakers, discussion leaders, and round table consultants. The attendance included representatives of Consumer Councils, Consumer Federations, Defense Councils, wholesaler and retailer food industries, labor unions, farmers' union, the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, educational institutions, and such national organizations as the American Legion Auxiliary, the American Home Economics Association, the American Association of University Women, and the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Leon Henderson gave the address of welcome, followed by Mrs. Dwight Morrow whose subject was "The Purpose of the Conference." She expressed the hope that the meeting would create a better understanding among consumers as to how a food program can be worked out. She said that vigorous thought should be given to the problem of feeding our own soldiers, our own civilians, and those overseas who need our help. The conference group was described as a nonpartisan body, organized to represent the point of view of consumers—the only national citizens committee concentrating on food which is not related to Government, industry, or labor.

Talks by Dr. T. W. Schultz, University of Chicago; James D. Patton, president of the National Farmers' Union; and Victor Reuther, UAW War Policy Committee, offered much "food for thought" for the representatives who participated in round table discussions thereafter. Approximately half the time was spent in group meetings, half in general sessions. The round table groups, each with a discussion leader and several consultants, gave their attention, respectively, to the following seven questions: (1) "How can we really hold food prices down?" (2) "How well is our food distribution working?" (3) "How is the war worker feeding himself and his family?" (4) "How can we make the best use of our food in wartime and after the war?" (5) "How can we step up home production and conservation of food?" (6) "Can the consumer help to get maximum production?" (7) "What can we do to help supply the food needs of our allies and of liberated people?"

The following highlights of round table discussion—(4) on the use of food—will be of special interest to Nutrition Committee members:

To know the effect of food shortages and prices on public nutrition, studies on present-day consumption on a family and income basis are needed. These should be paralleled by studies on health and nutritional status. Families with low to moderate fixed incomes may not be able to purchase an adequate diet in wartime; for such families a plan for increased income or a selective food subsidy needs consideration.

Civilian supplies now include more of some commodities and less of others than in the period just preceding the war; in terms of nutrients, civilians are as well off in some and better off in others, due in part to the enrichment program for flour and bread. The food supply of individual families depends upon family income, local marketing facilities, and the over-all distribution and transportation situation. If ideally distributed among families, the quota for civilians would seem to be sufficient to meet nutritional needs without many changes in food habits. The group agreed upon the importance of the use of alternates for basic foods in short supply, mentioning particularly the use of fortified margarine, and of soybeans and soya products.

Rationing of foods in scarce supply was considered the best means of equitable distribution. Differential rationing of milk and some control over the rationed foods served in restaurants were favored.

There was considerable discussion on nutrition education. The concensus was that several areas of the population are not reached, especially the poorly educated cross section, regardless of where they live. More coordination of effort at the local level of all groups was stressed—church, civic, labor, foreign-language, and Negro groups, all of whom have a stake in nutrition education. Through their direct contact with the people they could arouse active interest and action. Stress was laid on enlisting lay people in nutrition programs, providing them with training, and giving them "standing" as lay leaders. Where nutrition committees had not functioned fully, it was thought that this was sometimes due to the fact that the membership did not represent a cross section of the community.

A plea was made for more simplified material: Primerlike publications, colorful posters with little text, films, comic strips, talks scaled to the background of the audience and given wherever a group can be reached; more use of the radio in dramatic presentations to reach people who will not listen to "speeches."

The Honorable Henry A. Wallace built his talk "Food for Victory and Jobs for Peace" around two main points: (1) Food for Victory, and (2) Victory on the home front during the peace. In conclusion, the Vice President made a plea that each do his part to put into action an adequate victory food program now, followed by an adequate job program. "Food and jobs are two of the foundation stones of the century of the common man."

THE NUTRITION WORKSHOP IN PUERTO RICO

A workshop was sponsored by the Nutrition and Food Conservation Branch of the Food Distribution Administration in Puerto Rico during June. It was directed by Dr. Lydia Roberts of the University of Chicago. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together people from the different agencies who would par-

ticipate in and contribute to a nutrition program for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Increase and improvement in the home production of foods and better use of the resources were stressed in all phases of the workshop, with men engaged in food production and distribution taking an active part. Demonstrations on the use of native foods, on the use of soybeans, rabbit meat, dried milk and eggs, and on canning and drying of foods were given. Nutrition education programs for the future were planned.

The results of the workshop are already evident in that nutrition courses are now being conducted in several cities on the island, with a good deal of publicity by local newspapers. Newspapers in one city are reported to be "clamoring daily for a nutrition adult class." Attendance has been good and the groups actively participate in discussions. Workers from nursery schools and school-lunch projects are putting the lessons into practice. One teacher who attended the workshop holds a workshop of her own for other teachers, after school hours. These teachers are outlining the work by grades, making materials, and plan to give simplified nutrition lessons to their classes.

CHURCH SUPPERS OF HIGH NUTRITIVE VALUE

With the coming of winter, more church suppers and lodge dinners will be held. The Minnesota Defense Council Bulletin reported a church supper that was put on by the county nutrition committee in a small midwestern town. They planned a ration-free (except for butter and sugar), home-grown, nutritious meal, served cafeteria style. The vegetables in the salad were grated just before serving, and posters on the wall stated, "Your salad is being prepared as you pass, so that none of the vitamins will be lost in standing." Posters explained that the dinner vegetables were cooked by the newer nutrition methods.

The chairman of the nutrition committee reported that on the day following the supper, they received many phone calls from people who had attended, asking questions on nutritive losses in food preparation. The attendance at the supper was reported as the best in years.

VIRGINIA PLANS A NUTRITION ATTACK FOR THE COMING YEAR

At the October meeting of the Virginia State Nutrition Committee, plans were laid for 1943-44 activities. A new Food Use Program Committee was appointed to cooperate in the national program of making maximum use of food while it is in abundance. Local Nutrition Committees were asked to build their program for the coming year around production, nutrition, rationing, and food preservation in order to assure State-wide participation in the Food Fights For Freedom program. In the interests of that program, speakers, the press, radio, and posters carried the food story throughout November. During the last week of November house-to-house visits by the Block Leader Service further emphasized the points to be stressed that month: (1) Basic Facts About Food; (2) War Needs Come First; (3) Conservation of Food Through Stoppage of Waste; (4) Substitution of Plentiful for Scarce Foods in the Diet.

During the next year, one Virginia county will be selected by the State Nutrition Committee as a demonstration county. All agencies concerned with food and nutrition will demonstrate what concerted efforts in the same county can do. Each State agency will interpret the year's nutrition program to its workers and urge their cooperation and support. Leaders and volunteers will be trained through local resources.

A Selected List of Nutrition Articles Appearing in Monthly Publications
Prepared by the Subcommittee on Educational Materials, Connecticut State
Nutrition Committee. (Reprints not available from this office.)

BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS

"Build Top-Health Meals in Spite of Shortages," by Genevieve Callahan.
 October 1943, page 39.
 "How to Use Soybeans." November 1943, page 49.
 "24 Tips on Food Saving," by Ida Ruth Younkin. November 1943, page 38.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

"It's Harder to Plan Meals These Times," by Katherine Fisher. November 1943, page 92.

HYGEIA

"Food Poisoning Is Avoidable," by Ragna B. Eskil. October 1943, page 716.
 "Nutrition Quiz," by Mary C. Brown. October 1943, page 740.

McCALL'S

"What Should We Expect of Soybeans?" October 1943.

WOMAN'S DAY

"War Food Bulletin." November 1943.

WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION

"Four Ways to Keep Well in Wartime," by Lewis Gunther, M. D. November 1943.

NEW MATERIALS (Samples Enclosed)

"COOKING WITH SOYA FLOUR AND GRITS" - This pamphlet (AWI-73) gives information about soya flour and grits with recipes for using them in main dishes, soups, and sauces, breads, sandwich fillings, desserts, etc. It is issued by the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics. Extra copies will be available at regional Food Distribution Administration offices.

"NUTRITION EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL" - A bulletin prepared by the U. S. Office of Education in cooperation with the Food Distribution Administration, suggesting and explaining the many activities that may be carried on in the elementary grades to make nutrition education effective. It also tells of the cooperative efforts that are being made to promote nutrition education and lists available materials suitable for use in schools. This bulletin is being widely distributed through educational channels. A limited number are available without cost from regional Food Distribution Administration offices, or copies may be had at 15 cents each from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

"FOOD FOR YOUNG CHILDREN IN GROUP CARE" - A supplement has just been issued by the Children's Bureau to this bulletin which was mentioned in News Letter No. 9. The bulletin was prepared to aid persons responsible for the feeding of young children in day nurseries, nursery schools, and day-care centers for children of working mothers. The supplement, "Suggestions for Adjusting to Wartime Restrictions," serves as a guide in adapting the suggestion in the bulletin to wartime conditions. Additional copies of the bulletin and the supplement are available from the Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

"BIG DOINGS ON THE FOOD FRONT" - Reprint of front page article in USDA bulletin for October 16, 1943. It highlights the Food Fights for Freedom program which began in November

NEW MATERIALS (Sample not enclosed)

"MENU-PLANNING GUIDE FOR SCHOOL LUNCHES" - This bulletin describes in detail type A and B Lunches as defined by FDA. A number of basic menu plans are offered as a guide to following the Type A and B patterns. These plans are supplemented by a variety of suggested main dishes that allow for adjustment to wartime food conditions. Additional copies are available at regional FDA offices.

"WARTIME FOOD FOR FOUR INCOME LEVELS" - A booklet issued by The Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics, University of California, giving food budgets for families of four with executive, white-collar worker, wage earner, or dependent incomes. The budgets are adjusted to May 2 rationing, with prices prevailing in San Francisco in March 1943. It also gives sample menus and possible substitutions. Copies may be obtained from the University of California Press, Berkeley, Calif., for 35 cents each.

"THE GOVERNMENTS' MILK CONSERVATION PROGRAM - WHAT? WHY? HOW?" and "DAIRY PRODUCTS ARE PRECIOUS - USE THEM WISELY" - These leaflets were prepared by the National Dairy Council to tell why conservation is necessary and to explain some of the ways to conserve all dairy products. These leaflets are available from the National Dairy Council, 111 North Canal Street, Chicago 6, Ill.

Sincerely yours,

Chief, Nutrition and Food
Conservation Branch

Enclosures.

Associate Chief, Nutrition and Food
Conservation Branch

FOOD DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION

Regional Offices and States in Each Region

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Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia.

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Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.

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Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas.

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(Due to a regional reorganization there are now only the above five regions.)